



NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Indiana agriculture officials celebrate National Ag Day

INDIANAPOLIS (March 20, 2018) — Agriculture is critical to everyday life, from the food we eat to the clothing we wear. As the nation joins together to celebrate [National Ag Day](#) today, [Lt. Governor Suzanne Crouch](#) and [Indiana State Department of Agriculture](#) Director Bruce Kettler want to remind Hoosiers just how important agriculture is to our economy and society.

“Agriculture contributes an estimated \$31 billion to our economy and is part of our state’s identity, with more than 80 percent of Indiana land dedicated to farms, forests and woodlands,” Crouch said. “Those who work in the industry are responsible for nearly everything we eat, use and wear, and today, we honor their hard work, ingenuity and perseverance.”

Despite being one of the smallest states geographically, Indiana is the 11th most productive farming state in nation, according to USDA. On average, Indiana has just under 57,000 farming operations, and farmers cultivated more than 14 million acres of farmland in 2016.

Last year, the state’s top five commodities consisted of corn, soybeans, meat animals, poultry and eggs, and dairy, which together accounted for over 90 percent of all agricultural products sold. In addition to these commodities, Hoosier farmers also grow more than 30 different major fruits and vegetables, and Indiana is a national leader in several varieties including tomatoes (for processing) and watermelons.

“We have a diverse and prosperous agriculture industry, which is the driving force behind most of Indiana’s rural economies,” Kettler said. “On National Ag Day and every day, it’s important to show our appreciation for those, who carry on this rich tradition and produce the food, fuel and fiber we need for our everyday lives.”

The National Ag Day program first started in 1973 and is managed by the Agriculture Council of America, which believes that every American should understand how food and fiber products are produced; appreciate the role agriculture plays in providing safe, abundant and affordable products; value the essential role of agriculture in maintaining a strong economy; and acknowledge and consider career opportunities in the agriculture, food and fiber industry.

Visit www.agday.org for more information or ideas on how to celebrate National Ag Day.

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ABOUT ISDA

The [Indiana State Department of Agriculture](#) (ISDA) was established as a separate state agency by the Legislature in 2005. Administratively, ISDA reports to [Lt. Governor Suzanne Crouch](#), who also serves as Indiana’s Secretary of Agriculture and Rural Development. Major responsibilities include advocacy for Indiana agriculture at the local, state and federal level, managing soil conservation

programs, promoting economic development and agricultural innovation, serving as a regulatory ombudsman for agricultural businesses, and licensing grain firms throughout the state.



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